

	INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES CHILD WELFARE MANUAL	
	Chapter 10: Adoption/Permanency	Effective Date: August 1, 2008
	Section 1: Planning for Adoption - Overview	Version: 1

POLICY	FORMERLY: APPENDIX WW
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The process of adoption planning for all children in out-of-home care with a permanency plan of adoption may be initiated:

1. When a court finds an exception to the requirement to make reasonable efforts to reunify the family exists; or
2. When a child has been under a dispositional decree for at least six (6) months with no significant progress made towards a plan of reunification. See separate policy 6.11 Involuntary Termination of Parental Rights (TPR); or
3. At the filing of termination of parental rights (TPR).

The Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) will convene either a Child and Family Team (CFT) meeting or case plan conference to discuss adoption planning for the child and identify any needed services provided by a professional that specializes in adoption. See separate policy, [5.7 Child and Family Team Meetings](#). See also Related Information.

In accordance with the federal law that addresses race and ethnicity in placements, MEPA-IEP, DCS will not delay or deny the adoptive placement of a child based on the race, color, or national origin of the adoptive resource family or the child involved. If a Native American child is involved, the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) applies.

DCS will ensure that all children in out-of-home care with a permanency plan of adoption receive age appropriate preadoptive services (e.g., individual counseling, homebased services, etc., that is offered by a service provider that specializes in adoption services) to prepare the child for the adoption process.

DCS will ensure that a diligent search is conducted to locate all possible family members to discuss adoption, followed by searching for a non-relative potential adoptive family for all children with a permanency plan of adoption.

Code References

N/A

PROCEDURE

The Family Case Manager (FCM) will:

1. Staff the case with his/her supervisor to review progress and discuss permanency options prior to changing the permanency plan to adoption;
2. Schedule a CFT or case plan conference to discuss the need to change the permanency plan; See separate policy, [6.10 Permanency Plan](#).

3. Notify the following persons of the Court hearing to change the permanency plan. See separate policies, [6.4 Providing Notice](#) and [6.11 Permanency Hearing](#).
 - a. The child;
 - b. Child's parent/guardian/custodian and attorney of record;
 - c. Resource Parent; and
 - d. Guardian Ad Litem (GAL) or Court Appointed Special Advocate(CASA), if applicable;
 - e. Any fit and willing relative or person who DCS knows has a significant relationship to the child.
 - f. Prospective adoptive parent is consent has been received or TPR has been filed
4. Attend the permanency hearing.
5. Update the case plan in Indiana Child Welfare Information System (ICWIS) to reflect the new court approved permanency plan.
6. Ensure that the following persons are notified of the court's ruling regarding the permanency plan:
 - a. The child;
 - b. Child's parent/guardian/custodian and attorney of record;
 - c. Resource Parent;
 - d. Mental Health Provider/Therapist, if applicable;
 - e. GAL or CASA, if applicable; and
 - f. Members of the CFT.
7. Begin the legal process for termination of parental rights. See separate policies, [6.12 Involuntary Termination of Parental Rights](#) and [6.13 Voluntary Termination of Parental Rights](#);
8. Refer the child to preadoptive services to help the child understand adoption as the permanency plan and to begin preparing for the adoption process. See separate policy, [10.3 Preparing the Child for Adoption](#);
9. Determine the child's adoptive placement needs;
10. Discuss with the resource family their role in helping prepare the child for the adoption process. See separate policy, [10.4 Resource Parent's Role in Preparing the Child for Adoption](#);
11. Determine the child's eligibility for adoption subsidies. See separate policies, [Adoption Assistance Program](#), [County Adoption Subsidy](#) and [Nonrecurring Adoption Expense](#);
12. Begin to identify, recruit, process, and approve a qualified adoptive family for the child. See separate policy, [10.10 Resource Parent Adoptions](#); and
13. Complete the Child Social Summary within 10 days of filing the TPR petition and submit to the Special Needs Adoption Program (SNAP) Specialist. See separate policy, [10.11 Child Social Summary](#).
14. Start child specific recruitment of potential adoptive families if no appropriate relative families can be located.

The Supervisor will:

1. Staff the case with the assigned FCM and make recommendations as needed;
2. Review and approve, if necessary, the child's placement needs as recommended by the FCM and CFT;
3. Ensure that a determination has been completed for adoption subsidies for the child;
4. Assist the FCM as needed to identify, recruit and approve potential adoptive families;
5. Ensure that that the child's Social Summary has been completed and forwarded to the SNAP specialist in a timely manner; and

6. Review and approve if necessary any preadoptive services needed for the child or the preadoptive family.

PRACTICE GUIDANCE

Child and Family Team Meetings and the TPR process

1. Two separate CFT meetings may be necessary, one for parents whose rights might be terminated and another one for the preadoptive family. Separate CFT meetings are not required if parents and preadoptive parents are willing to meet together.
2. CFT meetings can be used to determine transitional services, planning, and to address closure.
3. Following completion of TPR, parents whose rights were terminated may be included in the CFT meeting process, if they are deemed appropriate by the team.
4. Other appropriate family members and supports to the child can also be included in the CFT meeting following the completion of a TPR.

FORMS AND TOOLS

[Tool 10.B: Child Social Summary](#)
[Adoption Checklist](#) – Available in ICWIS

RELATED INFORMATION

N/A